



Renee Zaiser, CBCD
Two Rivers Bank and Trust
Burlington, IA

Renee Zaiser, CBCD has been at her bank for nearly 40 years. She pursued the club director position when it was posted in 2000 in part because it provided an opportunity to work with “older folks” who, she laughs, are now younger than she is. She is an “old soul” and likes to hear their stories. The travel that comes with the job is a bonus to the relationships that she is building and the dreams that she is helping to make come true. And the relationships aren’t just important for the bank; they’re important to Renee on a personal level.

Helping others is important to Renee. Every year Two Rivers Bank and Trust co-hosts a Paint-a-thon in association with Community Action of SEI and Diamond Vogel Paints. Renee helps co-ordinate this event which performs a valuable service to veterans, elderly, single parents and military personnel in the community. They have repaired and painted over 500 houses during the 24 years that they have been doing it.

Renee attends Peer Group every year. “It has allowed me to network with other directors and make lifelong friends with not only them but also with PTOs, DMOs and other tour providers. HCI has given me tools to use in making my job easier and more efficient. HCI is the best “family” with which to talk over issues, get ideas and learn from. The speakers and educational seminars they provide are wonderful. Being able to talk with the PTOs one-on-one in a relaxed setting is terrific. We also get to learn about the destination where we have Peer Conference each year. I believe it is an invaluable experience!”

She is loyal to the HCI PTOs. “I am fully committed to using PTOs as much as possible,” she says, “and I think we should all use them.” In October, her group did a Fall Foliage tour with Hospitality Tours and in November they were in Branson with Ozarks’ Kirkwood. Angie Greeno and Joy Penrod went above and beyond when Renee promised the group that they’d have a party during the trip if the Cubs won the World Series; they put together a terrific experience in just a few hours, making it possible for Renee to stay on schedule and not have to miss a step with her group. Renee also has upcoming trips planned with Mayflower (Mackinac Island), CTN (Kentucky) and Islands in the Sun (Australia/New Zealand) in 2017.

Looking back over the years, Renee has two favorite memories. The first is a trip to Australia where the group took a hot air balloon at sunrise. She recalls the difficulty of getting everyone into the basket with its high sides. Renee helped lift a short woman with hip problems over the edge to get into the basket, but getting out was tougher given the space limitations. They wound up tipping the basket on its side and “pretty much dragged her out” at the end. The woman was grateful for the assistance and the opportunity to take this once in a lifetime excursion. The other memory is of an elderly couple who participated in a river raft ride in Alaska. They were so grateful to be able to experience something that, at their age, they never thought they’d be able to do. About those situations and so many more, Renee says, “That’s why you do this job – to make their dreams come true.”